

City of Eau Claire

City Council

Fiscal Policy Advisory Committee

Report on Public Comment

Opportunities 2010

September 13, 2010

Fiscal Policy Advisory Committee
Council Member Dave Duax, Chair
Council Member Thomas Kemp
Council Member Jackie Pavelski

Mike Huggins
Cathy Marohl

City Manager
Executive Assistant



Fiscal Policy Advisory Committee Report on Public Forum Presentations
September 2010

Attached is the Fiscal Policy Advisory Committee Report (FisPAC) Report on Public Comment Opportunities, presented by the Committee members in September 2010.

The city has utilized public information forums for the past three years to inform and engage citizens in discussions about the city's future. New initiatives this year included the Budget in Brief publication, the 30-minute comment period during Monday evening council meetings, expanded community forums, and informational materials on the city's web site. The intent was to provide a number of opportunities for the public to learn of and comment on city-wide and district-level service and fiscal issues.

Included in the attached report are the Budget in Brief document, a copy of the Power-Point presentation used at the forums, and feedback results from the various questions and questionnaires used as a part of the process.

Sincerely,

Mike Huggins
City Manager

Attachment



2010 Public Comment Opportunities

For the past several years, the City has hosted community forums for citizen input. In 2010, the city hosted a community forum and neighborhood update for residents and businesses in each of five Council Districts. The forum presentations included an update on events and projects anticipated in each district for 2010, along with an overview of the 2010 budget and the anticipated fiscal challenges facing the City over the next several years. An opportunity for small group discussion responses to prepared questions was provided toward the end of each presentation.

The open public forums were designed to provide an opportunity for citizens to engage in public discussions about issues related to the continued provision of public services in the Eau Claire community. Approximately 75 community members attended the six forums (excluding council members and staff). Forums were held at

District 1	Northstar Middle School	March 18
District 2	Gateway Church	April 22
District 3	Chippewa Valley Boy Scouts Office	May 4
District 4	First Congregational Church	May 18
District 5	Community Table	June 3

Additionally, a forum was held for members of the Eau Claire Area Chamber of Commerce on June 25. The slides from the presentations are included in this report.

In addition to the forum presentations, a “Budget in Brief” four-page overview of the adopted 2010 budget was also compiled in 2010 and distributed at the public meetings.

A “What’s Your Opinion?” revenue questionnaire about 15 potential revenue strategies was distributed at the public forums and was also posted on the City web site. The tabulated response to the revenue survey, along with responses to the public forum small group discussions are included in the report that follows.

Other major initiatives this year included the 30-minute comment period during Monday evening council meetings and informational materials provided on the city’s web site. The response to the 30-minute comment opportunities was quite limited. However, opportunities for public comment were also made available via the city’s web site email link and information was provided via the web site news items, the questionnaire mentioned above, and the many financial documents available online for review and download.

Overall, the intent was to provide a number of opportunities for the public to learn of and comment on city-wide, district-level and budget-related initiatives.

City of Eau Claire 2010 Budget in Brief

Overview

The City of Eau Claire's Mission Statement has been the guiding directive in the preparation of the 2010 Budget:

"We work together to meet public needs, provide for the common good, and deliver services essential for a healthy, safe, and sustainable community. We accomplish this through transparent and accountable governance, civic engagement, and collaborative problem-solving."

Challenges to the development of the budget included the national economic downturn, deteriorating State fiscal conditions, legislative levy limits and expenditure mandates, and local expectations for services. The economic downturn affected the City's rate of return on its investments, the amount of new construction in our community, and the ability and willingness of citizens to bear the rising costs of government. The State's sales and income tax revenues were sharply curtailed, hampering its efforts to resolve a historical structural deficit. In turn, the State passed its budget shortfalls to municipalities through reduced shared revenues, reduced services, and new fees.

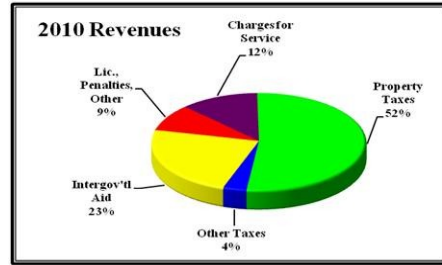
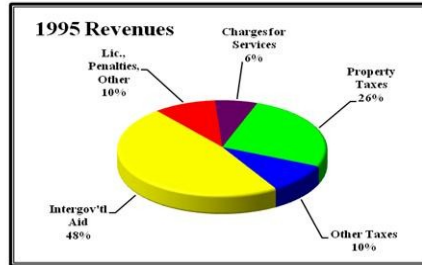
The State also legislatively limited the City's ability to raise levies or reduce spending on certain segments, including police, fire and library services. At the same time, citizens voice a preference for the City to maintain or improve service levels in most areas, including streets maintenance, storm water drainage, public safety, snow plowing, and recreational programs. The 2010 gap facing the City was approximately \$1.7 million. In addition, the City had to incorporate operational changes to offset the \$430,000 revenue shortfall resulting from the decision not to implement a vehicle registration fee in 2009.

Much of the projected shortfall was related to potential labor settlements. Significant changes in labor agreements and employee expectations were needed to resolve the shortfall. In an example of collaborative problem solving, the City's major unions agreed to wage settlements of 1% in 2009 and 1% in 2010. In spite of increases in the Wisconsin Retirement System payments and retiree health insurance premiums, the total General Fund payroll increased only \$193,700 or .5% of \$35.6 million.

2010 Budget Summary

General Fund Operations	45% \$ 54.3 million
Utility Operations	11% 13.9 million
Other Governmental Programs	26% 31.8 million
Capital Projects	18% <u>21.1 million</u>
Total	\$121.1 million

City of Eau Claire 2010 Budget in Brief



2010 GENERAL FUND REVENUES

Property Taxes	\$	25,480,000
Property Taxes for Debt		2,321,800
Other Taxes		1,892,500
Shared Revenues		7,154,300
Other Intergovernmental Revenues		5,244,600
Licenses and Permits		1,643,300
Fines and Forfeits		793,000
Charges for Services		3,460,400
Charges for Services-Intergov.		3,062,100
Miscellaneous		1,218,600
Other Financing Sources		1,116,600
Operating Revenues		53,387,200
Working Capital Applied		953,200
Total Revenues	\$	54,340,400

COMPARISON OF TAXES FOR SERVICES TO OTHER COSTS FOR PROPERTY OWNERS WITH HOME VALUED AT \$100,000

	Per Year
Heating / Air Conditioning	\$1,500 - \$2,000
Gas	1,800 - 2,200
Home and Car Insurance	1,000 - 1,500
Cable / Internet	600 - 1,200
Cell Phone	500 - 600
City / Library / Health	734

TAXES PER \$100,000 HOME

	2009	2010	Inc.	%
Collected for City Government:				
City of Eau Claire	\$ 608.40	\$ 632.10	\$ 23.70	3.9%
Public Library	65.30	64.40	(0.90)	-1.4%
City-County Health	38.30	37.90	(0.40)	-1.0%
Total City Government	\$ 712.00	\$ 734.40	\$ 22.40	3.1%

City of Eau Claire 2010 Budget in Brief

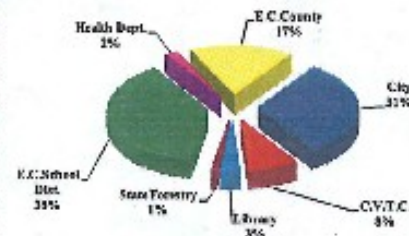
Summary of 2010 General Fund Budget

Summary General Fund Expenditures by Classification

	2009 Adopted	2010 Adopted	\$ Change	% Change
Wages	\$ 28,166,000	\$ 28,267,400	\$ 101,400	0.36%
Health Insurance	7,448,200	7,540,500	92,300	1.24%
Office Supplies / Publication Costs	319,800	303,300	(16,500)	-5.16%
Computer Service Charges	359,200	343,300	(15,900)	-4.43%
Utilities	1,566,300	1,500,300	(66,000)	-4.21%
Equipment Rental	2,680,900	2,896,000	149,100	5.56%
Uniforms	94,500	91,800	(2,700)	-2.86%
Building Rental	385,600	405,900	20,300	5.26%
Street Maintenance Materials	379,800	383,800	4,000	1.05%
Other Material & Supplies	622,500	614,100	(8,400)	-1.35%
Repairs to Buildings & Equipment	293,600	291,700	(1,900)	-0.65%
Construction Contracts	445,000	545,000	100,000	22.47%
Training - All Departments	220,000	209,300	(10,700)	-4.86%
Insurance	472,500	472,500	-	0.00%
Debt Service	4,337,800	4,971,600	633,800	14.61%
Transfer to CIP	2,142,700	1,637,800	(484,900)	-22.63%
Operating Subsidies	1,961,100	1,573,000	(388,100)	-19.79%
Outside Organization Funding	292,500	294,900	2,400	0.68%
Equipment	22,400	42,400	20,000	89.29%
Legal Services	21,600	21,600	-	0.00%
All Other Costs	1,636,600	1,724,200	47,600	2.84%
Contingency	228,000	250,000	22,000	9.65%
Total General Fund	\$ 54,143,000	\$ 54,340,400	\$ 197,400	0.36%



2010 BUDGET TAX DISTRIBUTION



The City's 2010 Levy was 31% of the total tax bill.

City of Eau Claire 2010 Budget in Brief

Capital Improvement Plan

The Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) for 2010 to 2014 lists projects totaling \$171 million over the next five years. The 2010 \$21.1 million in projects reflect the City's responsibilities for maintaining the existing infrastructure, including mains, streets, bridges, detention basins, park amenities, and other buildings and facilities.

Major projects on the near horizon include

- wastewater sludge processing improvements, \$37m
- water treatment plant improvements, \$4.3m
- expanded police facilities, \$5 m
- replacement buses, \$1.6 m
- Fairfax pool renovations, \$4.3 m

Future Outlook

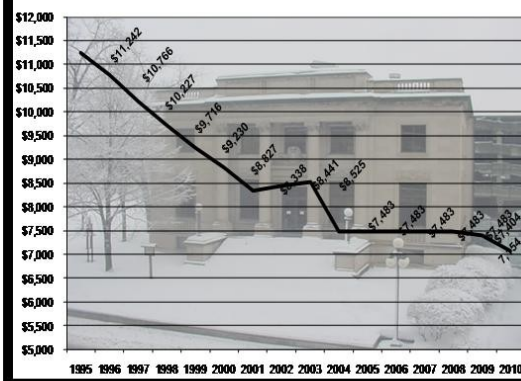
The outlook for future budgets continues to cause concern. It is unlikely that the State will resolve its structural deficits in a manner that will provide more support for municipalities. If anything, the City will experience further declines in shared revenues. Other unsettling trends are the legislative fiat like levy limits and public safety expenditure mandates that prevent local elected officials from addressing budget shortfalls in the most effective manner.

The 2010 Recommended Budget was balanced in a large part due to collaborative efforts with the City's labor groups, who have recognized that the City faces an unusually difficult economic situation. However, it is imperative that the City adjust service levels to sustain the budget at this level, or identify new revenue sources. Postponing maintenance on facilities, delaying equipment replacements, reducing street restorations, and minimizing staffing levels are not sustainable strategies for the long term. On the positive side, the City is well positioned to deal with these issues. The Council and staff have participated in strategic planning to identify the City mission and priorities. The City has expanded the role of civic engagement for problem solving. Employee process improvement teams are in place to suggest and implement operational changes that will result in budgetary savings and efficiencies. An interdepartmental green team has been charged with identifying cost effective ways of reducing energy usage and implementing technological solutions for communications and record keeping. With these initiatives in place, the City will continue to meet the challenges of each budget year.

Where the Money Goes

In 2010, the City will use your taxes, service charges, fines and fees to

- Seal Coat 10 miles of streets
- Crack seal 600,000 linear feet of streets
- Sweep 12,000 cubic yards of street debris
- Respond to 32,000 police calls for service
- Monitor 5,600 street lights
- Paint 270 crosswalks
- Plow 335 miles of streets
- Service 371,000 library visits
- Dispatch for 110,000 emergency calls
- Maintain 1,000 acres of public parks
- Complete 5,900 fire safety inspections
- Perform 6,500 school health screenings
- Respond to 5,900 fire/rescue calls
- Maintain 10,600 street signs
- Perform 14,000 bldg code inspections
- 8,500 citations prosecuted
- Oversee 15 water wells



State shared revenues continue to decrease. The State has slashed the City's annual shared revenue distribution by 35% since 1995, resulting in the loss of \$40 million

City Web Site: www.eauclairewi.gov

Budget: www.eauclairewi.gov/government/budget

FISPAC: [www.eauclairewi.gov/Boards &](http://www.eauclairewi.gov/Boards%20&%20Commissions/FISPAC)

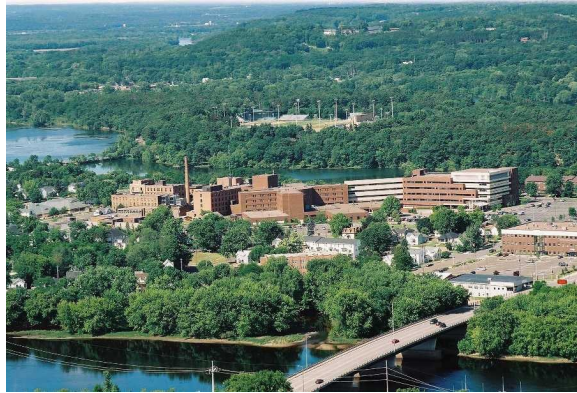
Commissions / FISPAC

Community Information: 839-5004

City Manager: 839-4902

(5-4-10)

2010 Community Report and Neighborhood Update



Spring/Summer 2010

Tonight's Agenda

- **High Performance Organization**
- **2010 City Wide Projects**
- **2010 District 3 Projects**
- **2010 Budget Overview**
- **Fiscal Challenges**
- **Civic Engagement Opportunities**
- **Table Discussions**

High Performance Organization

- December 2008 Baldrige initiative
- Mission Statement
- Core values
- 2010-2012 Strategic Priorities
- FOCUS Improvement Teams

City Mission Statement

"We work together to meet public needs, provide for the common good, and deliver services essential for a healthy, safe, and sustainable community. We accomplish this through transparent and accountable governance, civic engagement, and collaborative problem solving."

Core Values

- **Service**
- **Fairness**
- **Responsibility**
- **Integrity**
- **Collaboration**
- **Opportunity**

2010-2012 Strategic Priorities

- **Listen and engage with citizens**
- **Pursue proactive economic development**
- **Meet Infrastructure needs**
- **Create a strong public transportation system**
- **Empower innovative City work force**
- **Lead collaborative problem solving**
- **Sustain a healthy community**
- **Ensure fiscally sound government**

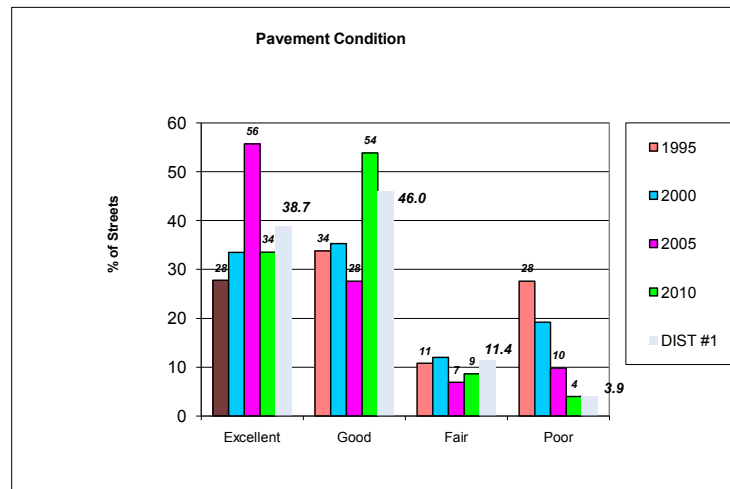
FOCUS Improvement Teams

- Combined employee leadership team
- Selected 10 initial projects
- Began 1st quarter 2010
- 90-day quick action
- Projects range from timesheets/travel statements, cleaning garbage cans, vehicle dispatch, vehicle maintenance, library emergency procedures

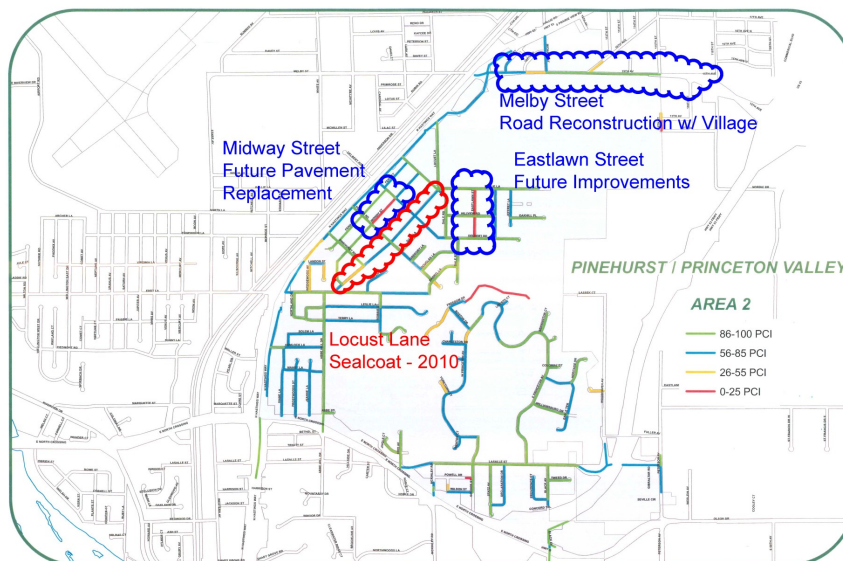
2010 City Wide Projects

- | | |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Street construction• Downtown Summerfest• Amazing Eau Claire Clean Up/Earth Day• US National Kubik Championships-Boyd Park• Jeffers Road Brush Site | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Hastings Way Redesign Stakeholder Meetings• Two-way traffic analysis for Barstow• Urban chicken proposal• Eau Claire Marathon• Chippewa Valley Air Show |
|---|---|

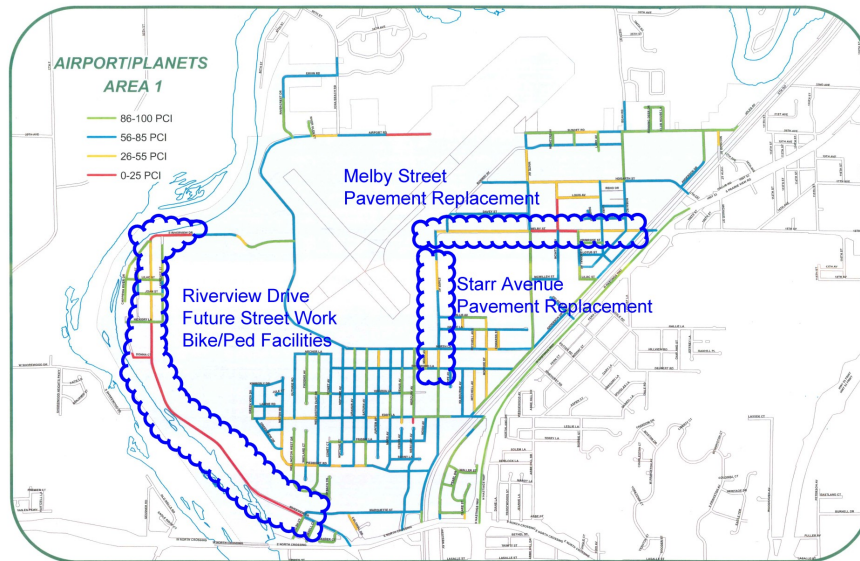
Pavement Conditions – District #1



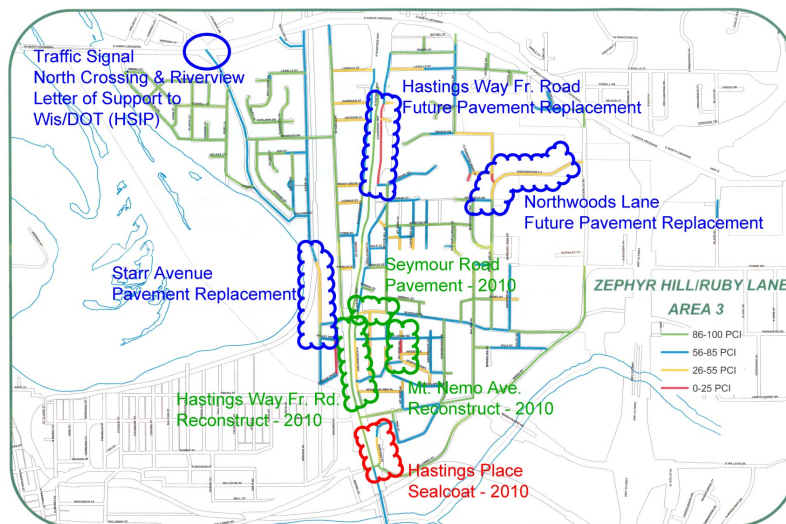
Public Works Projects



Public Works Projects



Public Works Projects

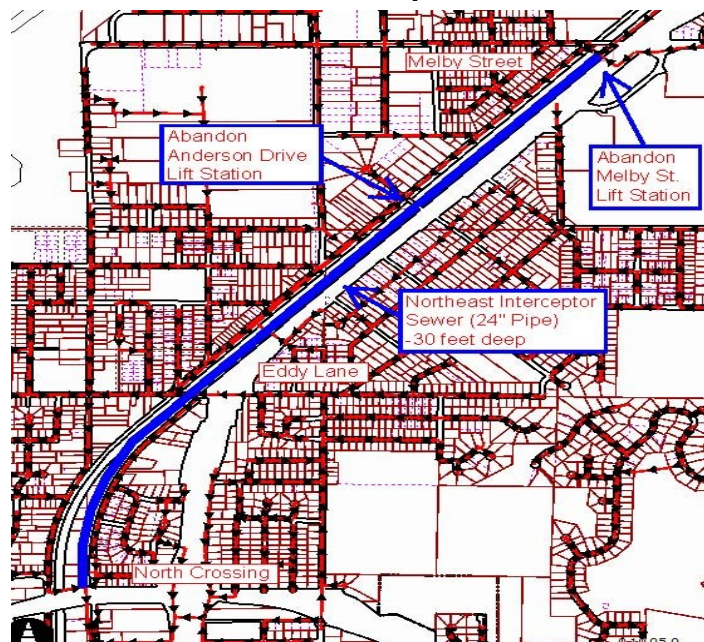


What's all the digging about along
the railroad tracks ?



Northeast Interceptor Sewer

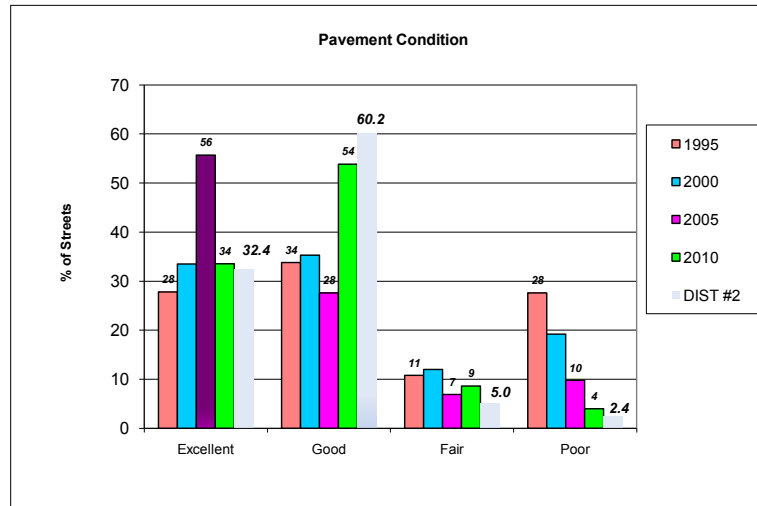
Northeast Interceptor Sewer



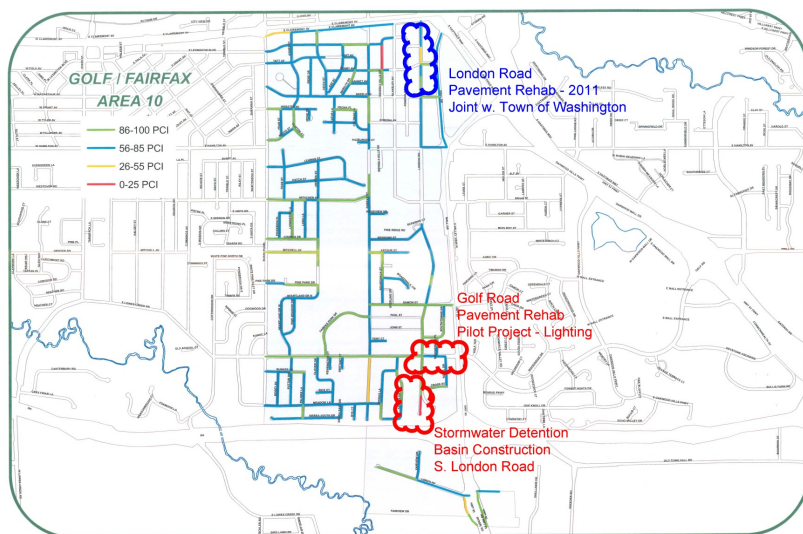
Northeast Interceptor Sewer

- Last Phase – N.E. Sanitary Sewer Master Plan (May, 1991)
- Started 1992 – under the North Crossing and Eau Claire River
- 24" pipe – 30 feet deep
- \$1.5 million project – paid for by the City Sewer Utility
- Allows for abandonment of 2 sewage pump stations
- Trail will be finished from North Crossing to Melby St.
- Project includes landscaping and tree planting restoration
- Work completed by July 31st – weather permitting

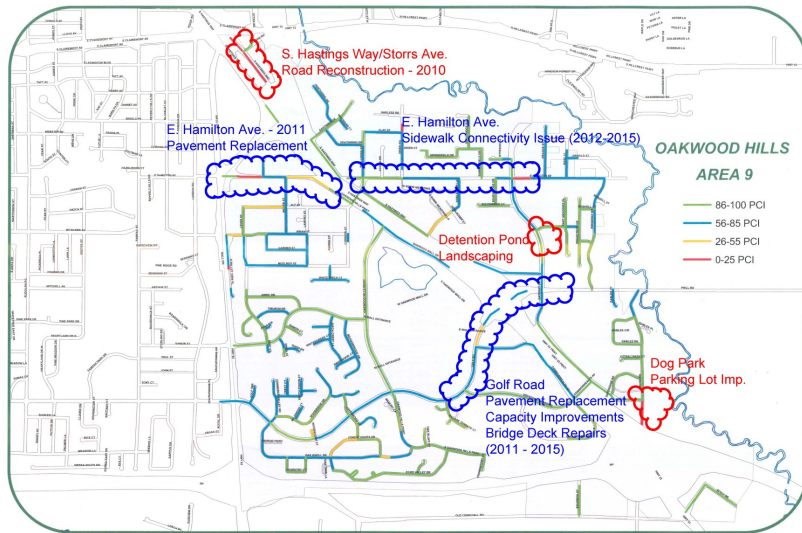
Pavement Conditions – District #2



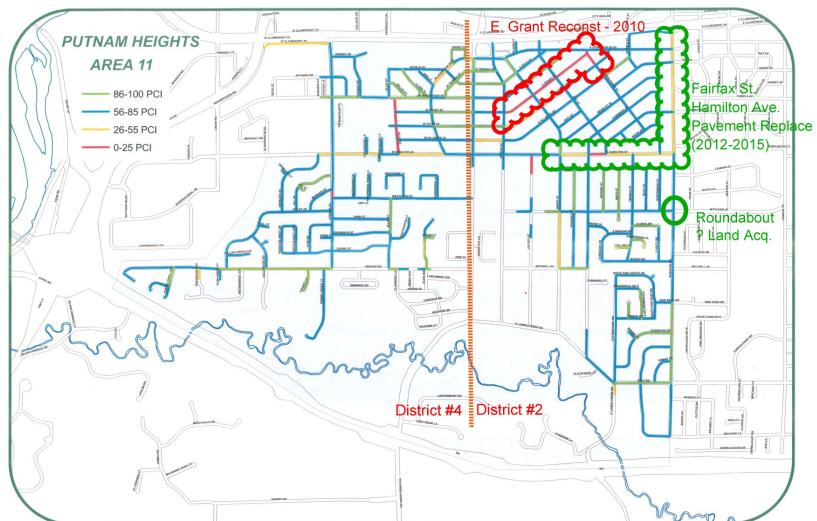
Public Works Projects



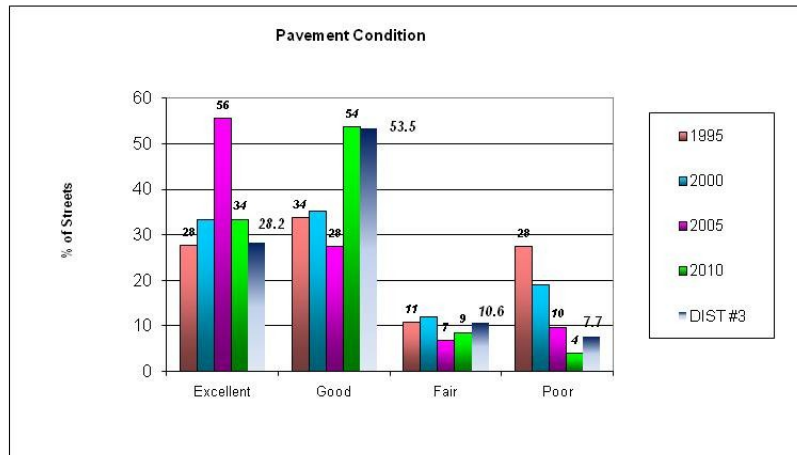
Public Works Projects



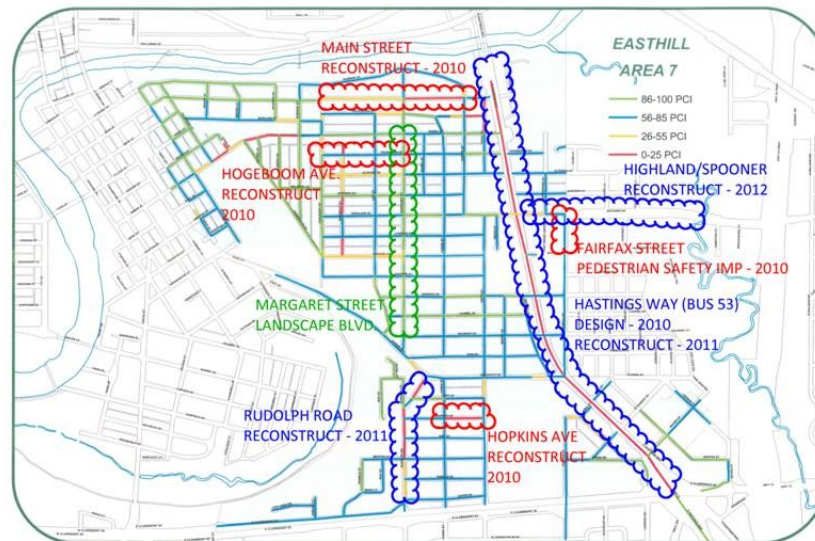
Public Works Projects



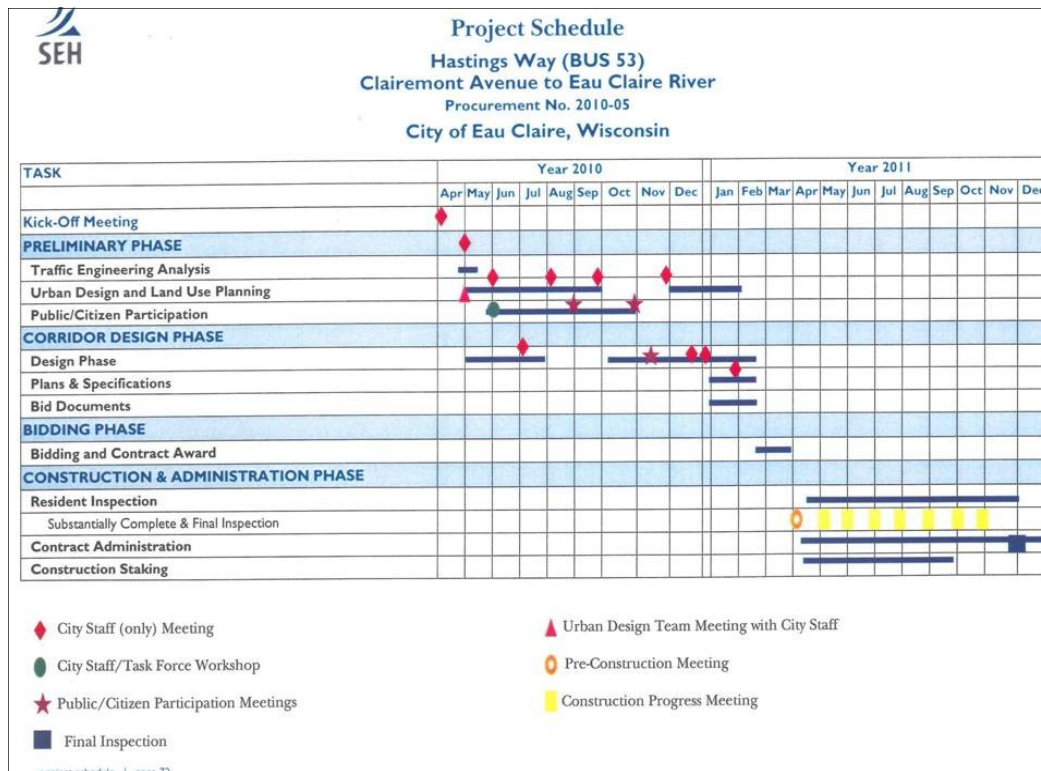
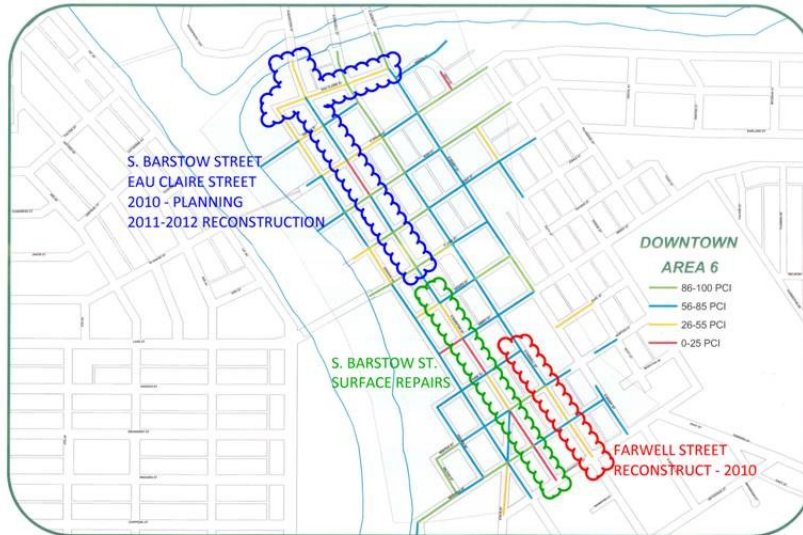
Pavement Conditions – District #3



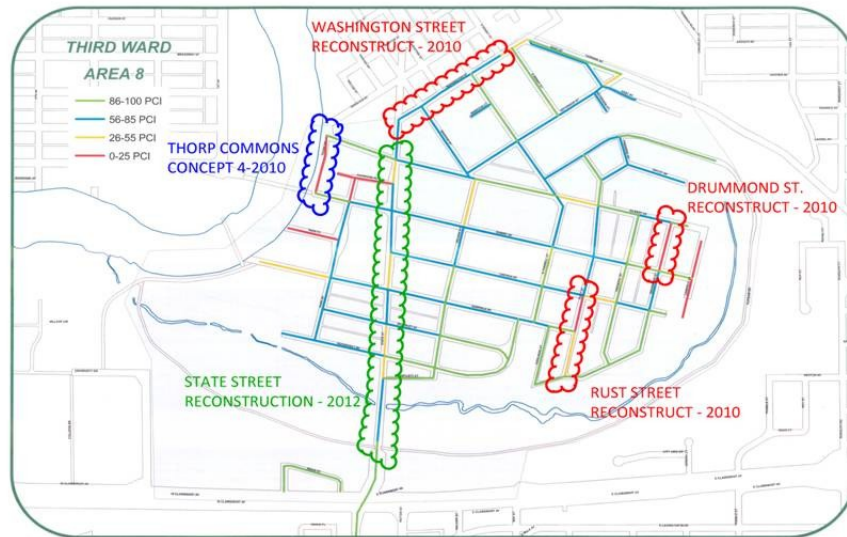
Public Works Projects



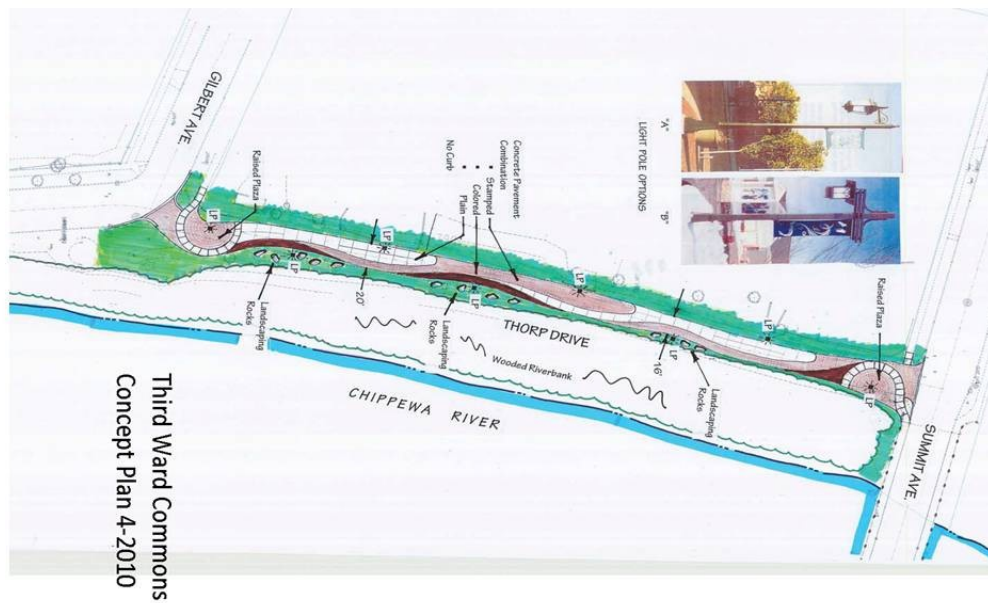
Public Works Projects



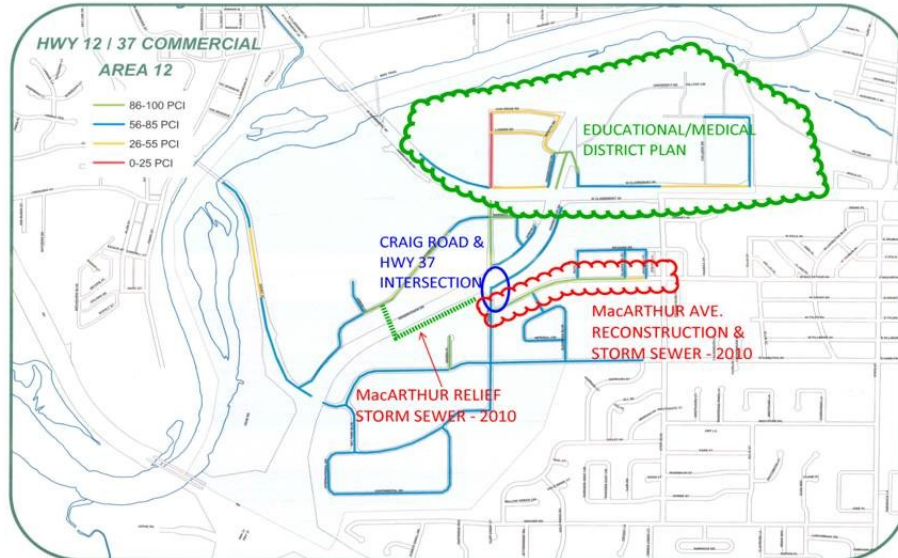
Public Works Projects



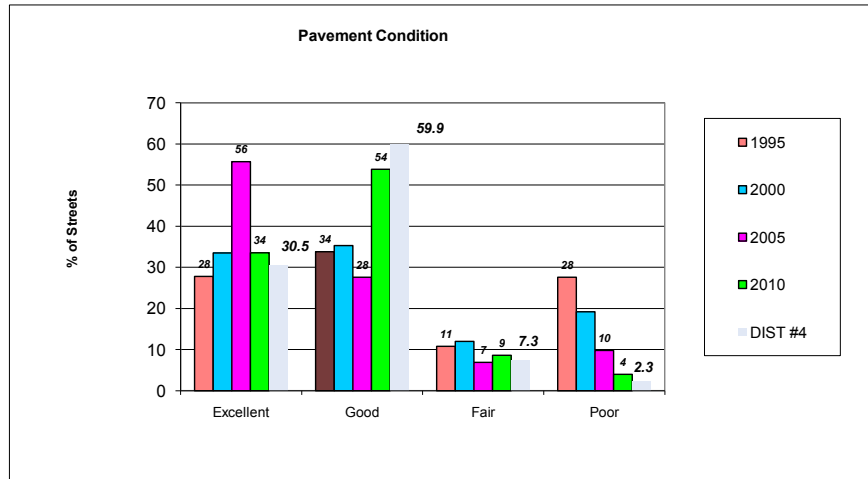
Third Ward Commons



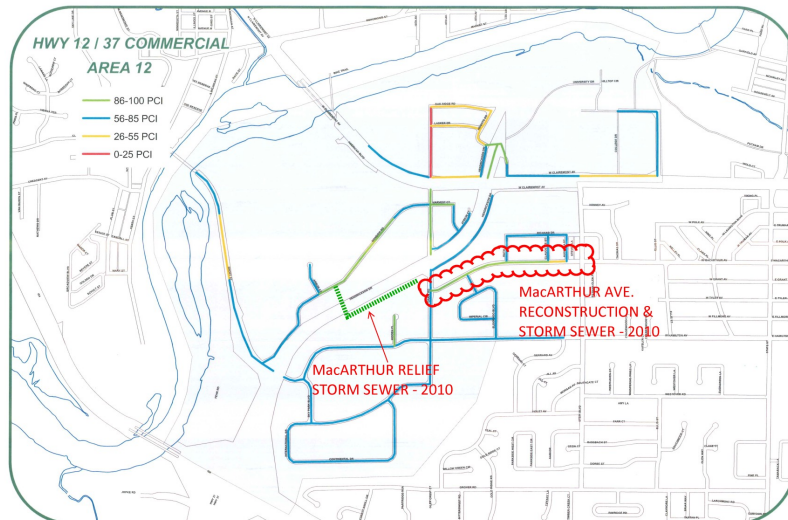
Public Works Projects



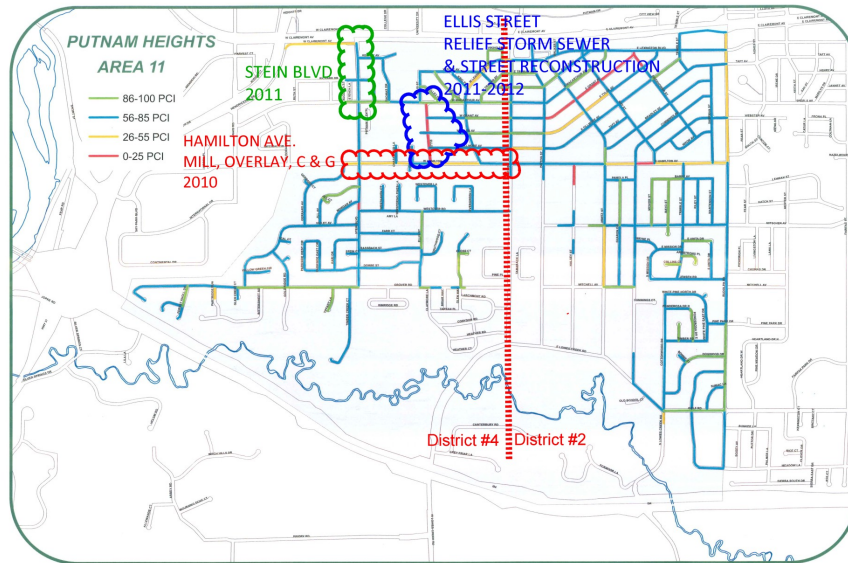
Pavement Conditions – District #4



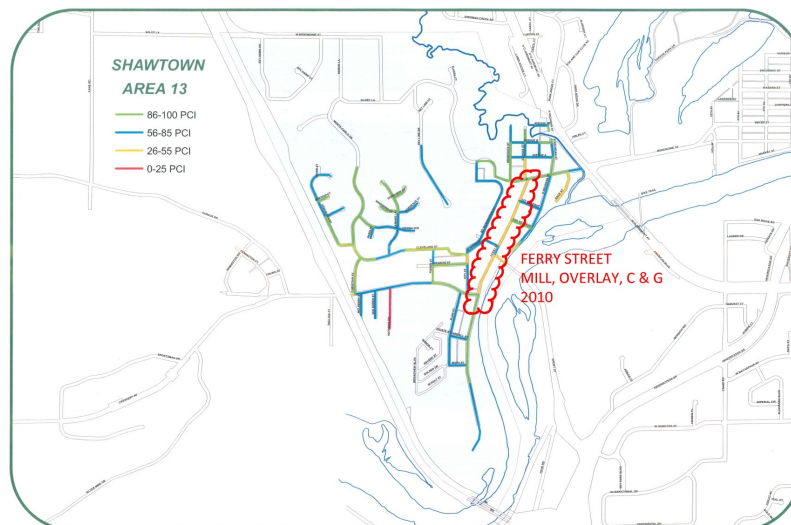
Public Works Projects



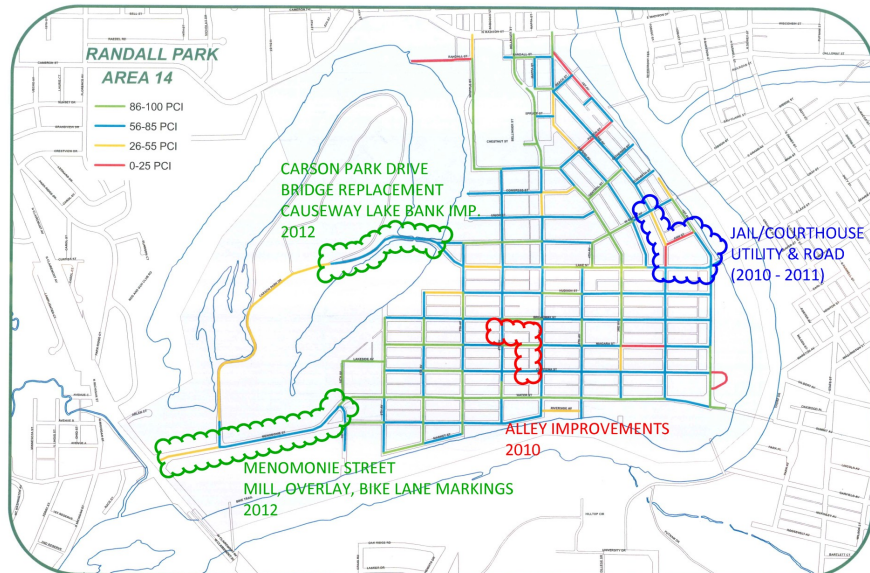
Public Works Projects



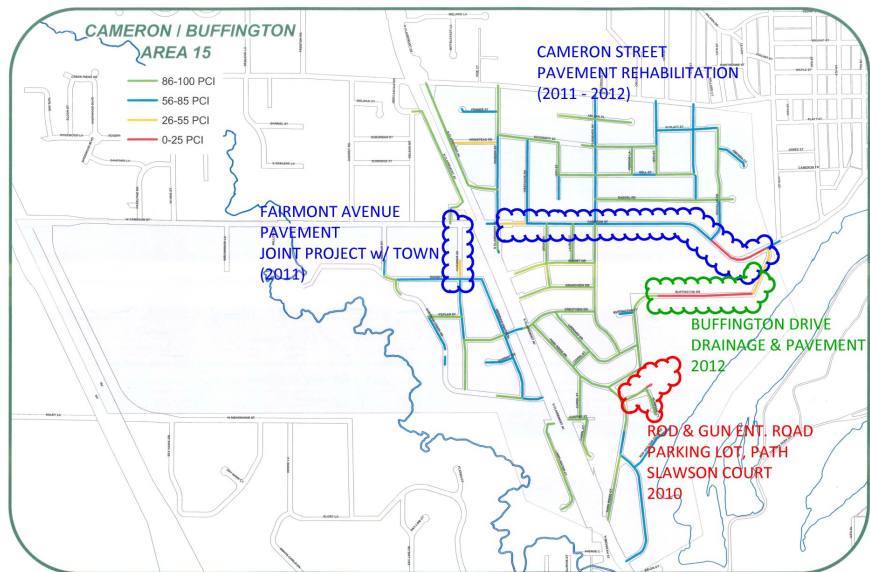
Public Works Projects



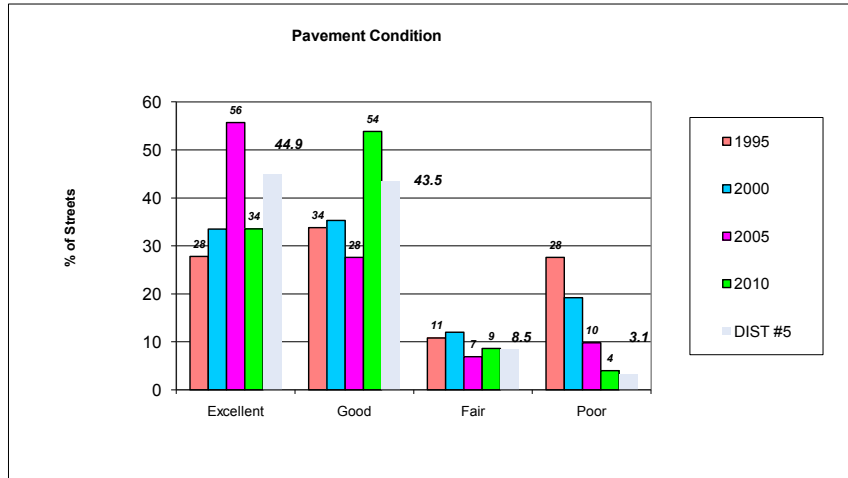
Public Works Projects



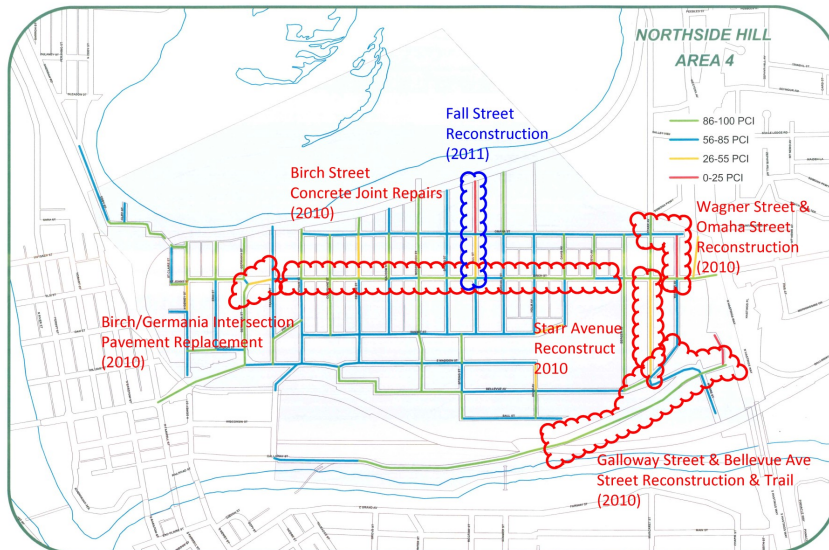
Public Works Projects



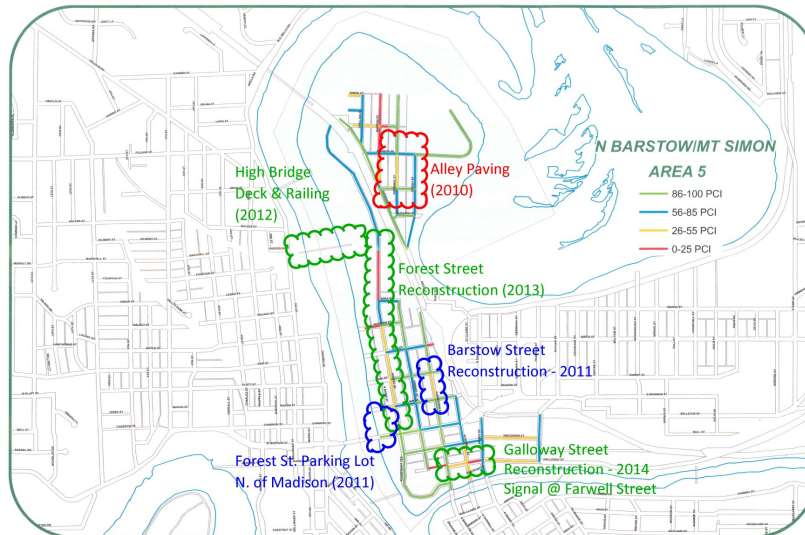
Pavement Conditions – District #5



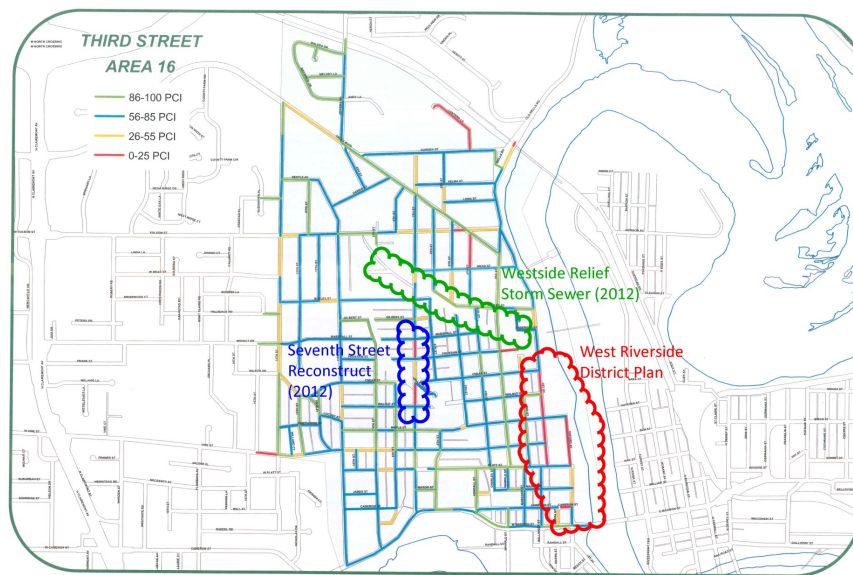
Public Works Projects



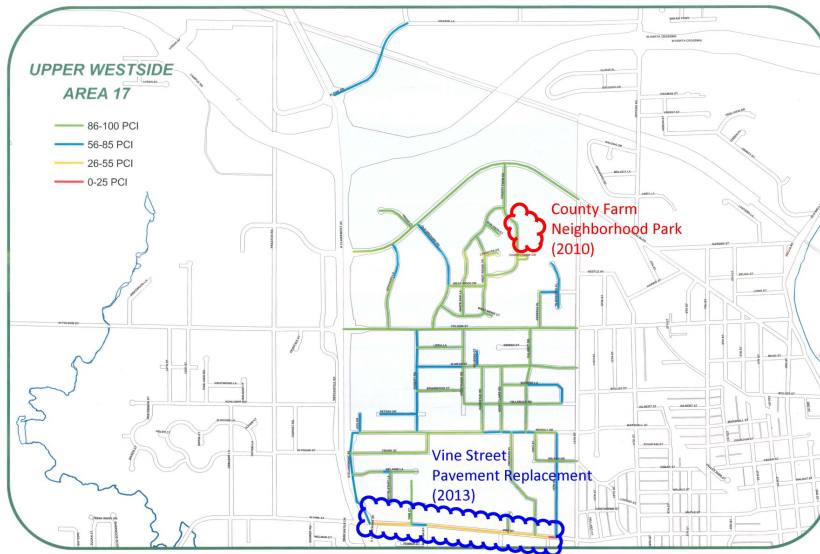
Public Works Projects



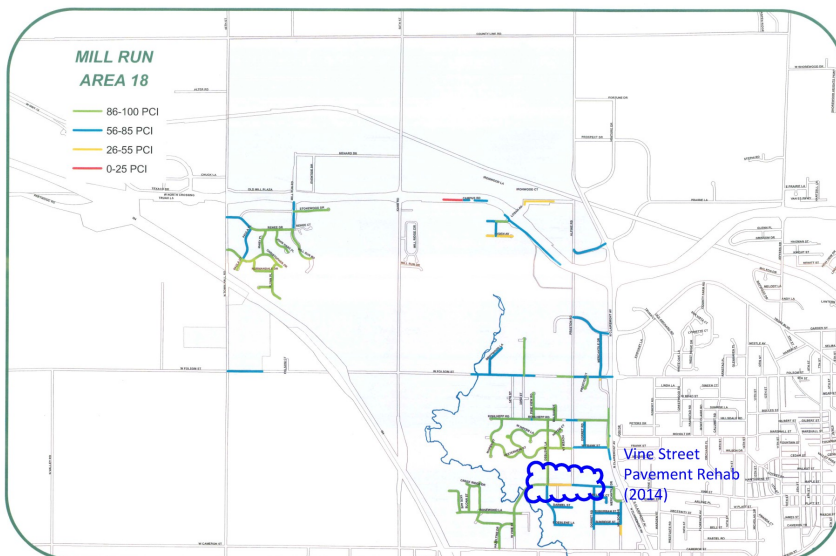
Public Works Projects



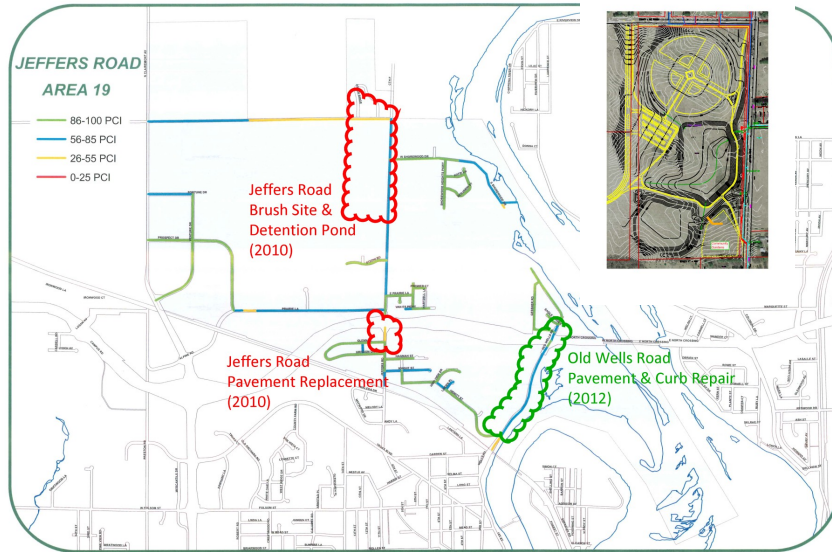
Public Works Projects



Public Works Projects



Public Works Projects



2010 Budget Overview

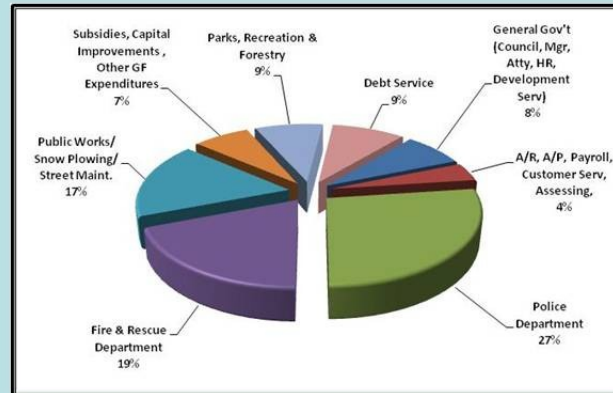
- *The City provides a wide range of services with a 2010 budget of \$121,197,700.*
- *These services can be grouped into four broad categories:*
 - General Fund
 - Utilities
 - Other Governmental Programs
 - Capital Projects

Adopted 2010 Budget

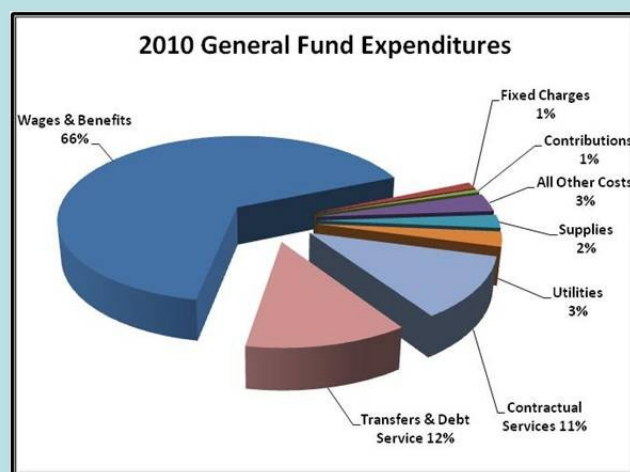
- **Operational Funds**
 - General Fund: \$54,340,400
 - Utilities: \$13,961,200
 - Other Governmental: \$31,736,700
 - Total \$100,038,300
- **Capital Projects**
 - 2010 Capital Projects \$21,159,400
 - 2011-2014 Projects \$150,151,400
- **Total 2010 Program \$121,197,700**

The City's tax levy is used to support the operations of the City Government. These services include police, fire, ambulance, street maintenance and park maintenance.

How Each Dollar of the City of Eau Claire's 2010 Tax Bill is Spent.



2010 General Fund Expenditures



Comparison: 2009 and 2010 Budgets

Adopted 2009 Budget

- Gen. Fund: \$54,143,000
- Utilities : \$13,702,200
- Other Gov.: \$31,982,300
- CIP Proj.: \$26,315,000
- Total: \$126,142,500

Adopted 2010 Budget

- Gen. Fund: \$54,340,400
- Utilities: \$13,961,200
- Other Gov.: \$31,736,700
- CIP Proj.: \$ 21,159,400
- Total: \$121,197,700

Balancing the projected \$1.7 million shortfall in 2010

- Limited employee wage settlements to 1% = \$134,200 increase
- 10.05 Position reductions: \$679,500 savings
- General fund subsidy reductions: \$388,100 savings
- Reduced Gen Fun subsidy for Seal coating \$100,000 savings
- Increased non-shared revenue state aids \$244,000 increase
- Increased City allocation of tax levy \$107,700 increase
- Reduced net decrease of other revenues \$183,600 increase
- Net reduction of non-wage expenditures (\$137,700)
- **TOTAL BUDGET ADJUSTMENTS** **\$1,700,000**

Fiscal Challenges

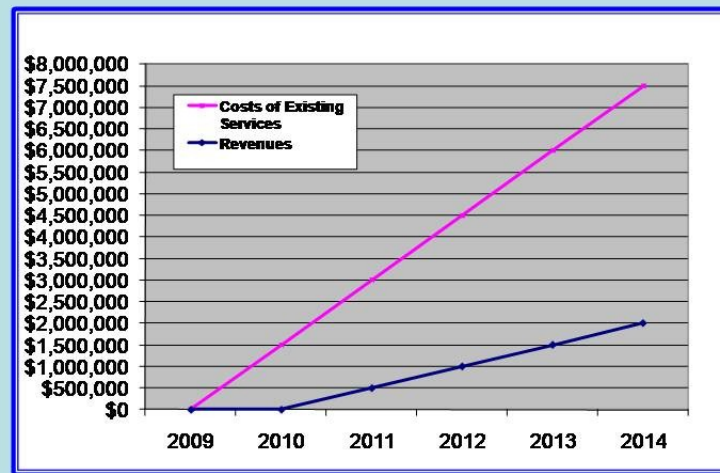
- Ongoing state fiscal crisis
- State structural budget deficit
- Slashed shared revenue transfers
- Historic transition
- New normal – new balance

State shared revenues down

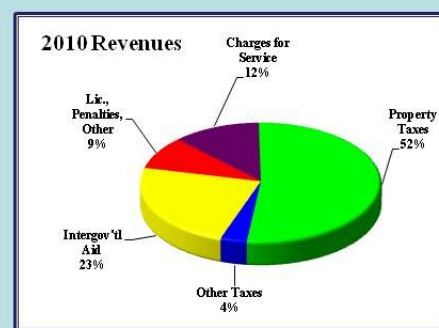
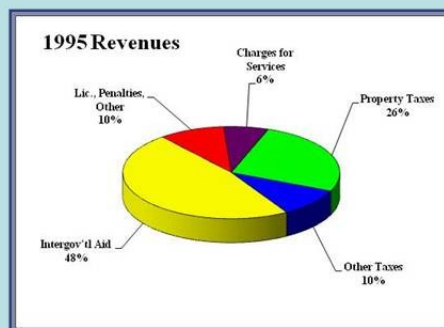


Combined State Revenue Loss from 1996 to 2010 = \$40,430,000

Cumulative Comparison of Projected Costs and Revenues (2009-2014)



Tax Burden Shift



Service Reductions Since 2003

- Cut 15 supervisory positions
- Cut 27 labor/clerical positions
- Cut full-day summer playground sites 75%
- Reduce summer public swimming pool hours 30%
- Eliminate police response on gas skips, minor theft and property damage
- Cut food service health inspections 30%
- Cut reduced-cost flu shots 50%
- Cut routine fire prevention inspections 50%
- Reduced full snow plow operations by 15%
- Reduce public transit services 10%

Service Innovations

- Regional EMS
- Hobbs Ice Arena users consortium
- Wellness based health insurance program
- 'Green business' energy focus
- E-government applications
- Expanded use of City website for information and communication
- Process improvement teams
- Fiscal Policy Advisory Committee

Fiscal Policy Advisory Committee

- Created by City Council in April 2009
- Council Members:
 - Dave Duax
 - Thomas Kemp
 - Jackie Pavelski
- Focus on long-term strategies
 - Support local economic recovery
 - Address intergovernmental fiscal crisis
 - Maintain essential public structures

Key Findings

- Public structures are vital to economic success
- Continued decline in US cities fiscal condition
- City has a lower per capita municipal tax levy
- State policies have shifted tax burden to local property tax
- City is required to have balanced budget
- City has significantly reduced staffing/services
- City has innovated to improve efficiencies

Long-Term Strategies

- Take action quickly where cuts need to be made
- Focus on core mission, purpose, and priorities
- Take a long term view
- Foster stewardship and cost containment
- Support innovations and process improvement
- Communicate with all stakeholders

Short-Term Strategies

1. Cut services to reduce costs
2. Increase revenues
3. Improve work processes to reduce expenditures
4. One-time use of fund balance

Projected Shortfalls in 2011+

- Future annual shortfall ~ \$1.7 m
- State estimates in June-July ??
- Rate of economic recovery
- State structural deficit
- Increased federal loans to state
- 2nd stimulus funding to backfill state costs?

Potential Service Impacts

- Further reductions in parks
- Consolidation of outdoor ice rinks
- Reduced/slower code enforcement
- Outsource services
- Defer capital projects
- Not fill some of the 15-25 anticipated retirements
- Reduced funding for community organizations?

Potential New Revenues

- Sell advertising
- Expand parking enforcement
- Sell excess City land
- Require annual bicycle registration license
- More precise water bills
- Incentives to expand tax base
- Sell City parking lots
- Carson Park July 4th parking fee
- Vehicle registration fee
- Boat launch fee
- Street light utility
- Annual snow plow services fee
- Park development fee
- Outsource City services
- Referendum to exceed tax levy limits

Annual Budget Schedule

- | | |
|-----------------------|--------------------------------------|
| • March – June | Community forums/updates |
| • April | Final 2009 Budget adjustments |
| • May | Department CIP worksheets |
| • June | Department operational worksheets |
| • July | Preliminary budget workpapers due |
| • August | Community organization requests due |
| • September | City Manager recommended budget |
| • October | City Council budget work sessions |
| • November | Council public hearings and adoption |
| • December | Tax roll transferred to County |

Civic Engagement Opportunities

- *Public Forums*
- *Council budget worksessions: October*
- *Council budget public hearings: November*
- *Monday Council meeting public comment*
- *www.eauclairewi.gov email comments*
- *Citizen Resource Bank*

Additional Information

- LE Phillips Library Reference Desk
- City Website: www.eauclairewi.gov
 - *Government/Budget*
 - *Government/Boards/FISPAC*

TABLE DISCUSSIONS

- 1) What **values** (from family, faith, civic or other traditions) are important to you?
- 2) If you had **three wishes** for your neighborhood or community, what would they be?
- 3) What **options** should the City consider in preparing future budgets? Reduce services? Add new revenues? Combination of both? Other?
- 4) What additional **revenues** should the City consider for 2011 (Complete survey and discuss)

Responses to Question 1

Comments from Districts 1 through 5 Public Forums 2010

1. What community **values and traditions** (from family, faith, civic or other traditions) are important to you?

- Sense of mutual support
- Idea of belonging
- Family / neighbors helpful
- Opportunity to have choices
- Right to express religious beliefs
- Contribute to community
- Better community for all
- Understanding cultural values and traditions
- Have a safe place to live, maintain standards for education
- Have good quality air and water
- Concept of sustainability for all, aspects of community-budget, energy
- Paying our way
- Balanced pride
- Ability to continue to meet expectations while understanding relative importance (can't meet all expectations)
- Value transparency and openness
- Respect
- Trust
- Ethics
- Openness of government – talk and question
- Enforcement / neighborhood quality of life
- Youth programs
- Maintaining parks and bike trails
- Safety
- Neighborhood quality of life
- Ability to participate
- Connectivity – street maintenance
- High quality of life
- Value good schools
- Hastings Way redesign
- Integrity, transparency, trust
- Environmental consciousness
- Recreational facilities, parks
- Civic Engagement
- Community building
- Personal responsibility
- Diversity (broad definition, economic)
- Accepting diversity
- History/heritage/pride in neighborhood
- Creative endeavor/opportunity for learning in arts
- Appreciation of natural beauty and for downtown, for what makes Eau Claire, Eau Claire
- Youth friendliness
- Public safety
- Arts and culture
- Preservation of historic districts
- Neighborhood playgrounds
- Research
- History
- Neighbors/neighborhoods
- Families
- Fishing
- Natural resources
- Awesome parks
- Music in the parks
- Traditions, historic neighborhoods
- Environment
- Trees
- Randall Park
- Rivers and making best use of them
- Rich diversity of non-profits
- Keeping things local
- Making best use of resources
- Meetings, civic engagement
- Festivals

Responses to Question 2

Comments from Districts 1 through 5 Public Forums 2010

2. If you had **three wishes** for your neighborhood, what would they be?

- Riverview and Hwy 312 traffic light
- Ice rink and park
- Reduce military aircraft noise
- Safe pedestrian and bike access to Riverview park
- Additional parking for Riverview Park (well fields) and for boats/trailers
- Limit parking to one side of the street near boat landing
- More frequent plowing where needed (near tall trees)
- More involvement by citizens in community
- High-speed passenger rail
- More jobs
- Safe non-vehicle access to shopping areas from neighborhoods
- Safer biking on streets
- More play lots and parks within ½ mile of residential areas
- People spread word of safe walking methods (light clothing)
- People see their involvement matters
- Less selfish approaches between community and government and within community
- More enlightened mechanism for reinvesting in the community (infill)
- More effective collaboration – get out of negative mind set
- Eau Claire known as a leader among cities
- Have sufficient revenues through looking at ways to increase tax base / more jobs
- Don't let being a very good community prevent us from becoming a great community
- Harness our aging population, give an incentive to get them involved
- Better use of river waterway for recreation
- Wish to work hard
- Don't cut education for children
- Incentives for getting people involved
- Understanding what factors are keeping us from meeting our budget
- Explore true partnerships with state
- Addressing tax-exempt issue
- On larger facilities, a snow removal fee on tax-exempt
- Affordable single-family homes
- Responsible landlords
- Community engagement to improve public spaces
- Collaborative projects to reinstate affordable programs
- Train connections, good jobs, livable wage, retain grads
- Safe place for all, affordable access to the available health care
- Maintain and improve quality of life, green spaces development of recreational lands near river
- Respect for diversity and change
- Collaboration of all listed areas
- Fair taxation and fees
- Quality of life for all
- Sustainability – think of future
- Move jail from downtown
- Preservation of neighborhoods (people move to neighborhoods)
- Attract more jobs to EC community
- Foster recognition and continuity of and among all neighborhoods
- Fishing pier at Grand Avenue bridge
- Respect and ensure historic and single family character of neighborhoods
- Safe community
- Good schools
- For everyone to know how cool Randall Park neighborhood is
- Outsource prisons
- Have neighborhood business district flowers
- More environmental sustainability, walkable neighborhoods with services

Responses to Questions 3 and 4

3. What **options** should the City consider in preparing future budgets? Reduce services? Add new revenues? Combination? Other?

- Development incentives, tax base expansion
- Sell city property and parking lots
- Outsource services, first prioritize
- Vehicle fee
- Use community service in lieu of fines/jail
- Maintain level of services
- Street lighting utility
- Billing accuracy of water meters
- Parkland development fees
- Sell advertising on city owned assets
- Boat launch fee
- Sell excess city property
- Fees for alternative energy resources
- Avoid construction of non-taxable properties
- Allow taxable development along river
- Parking enforcement
- Old Abe Statue on First Ave

4. Complete survey and discuss.

See following questionnaire and survey results.

Questionnaire Used for Revenue Survey

WHAT'S YOUR OPINION?					
<i>What's your opinion about potential options for creating additional revenues to pay for the costs of public structures and services?</i>					
Please circle your agreement with the following statement regarding each of the Potential Revenue Options that may be considered by the City Council for the 2011 Budget: <p style="text-align: center;">"The City Council should implement this revenue strategy in 2011" 1-Strongly Disagree 2-Disagree 3-Neither Agree or Disagree; 4-Agree 5-Strongly Agree</p>					
Potential Revenue Options	Rating				
a. Sell advertising on City assets	1	2	3	4	5
b. Expand parking enforcement	1	2	3	4	5
c. Sell excess City-owned property	1	2	3	4	5
d. Require annual bicycle registration license	1	2	3	4	5
e. Improve billing accuracy of water meters	1	2	3	4	5
f. Create development incentives to expand tax base	1	2	3	4	5
g. Sell excess City parking lots for development	1	2	3	4	5
h. Charge a Carson Park July4th parking fee	1	2	3	4	5
i. Adopt a Vehicle registration fee	1	2	3	4	5
j. Require a boat launch fee	1	2	3	4	5
k. Create a Street light utility	1	2	3	4	5
l. Charge annual snow plow fee for all property	1	2	3	4	5
m. Require a parkland development fee	1	2	3	4	5
n. Outsource City services	1	2	3	4	5
o. Hold a referendum to exceed tax levy limits	1	2	3	4	5
p. Other?					

Results from Survey (Question 4)

What's Your Opinion?

	<u>Avg.</u>
f. Create development incentives to expand tax base	4.17
c. Sell excess City-owned property	3.86
g. Sell excess City parking lots for development	3.52
m. Require a parkland development fee	3.50
e. Improve billing accuracy of water meters	3.48
k. Create a street light utility	3.32
b. Expand parking enforcement	3.29
j. Require a boat launch fee	3.22
a. Sell advertising on City assets	3.14
d. Require annual bicycle registration license	2.97
i. Adopt a vehicle registration fee	2.88
o. Hold a referendum to exceed tax levy limits	2.60
l. Charge an annual snow plow fee for all property	2.46
n. Outsource city services	2.36
h. Charge a Carson Park July 4 parking fee	2.29
p. Other	

Findings

- The 2010 series of community forums was a valuable process for Council members, City staff, and community members.
- The process of setting up and presenting the forums was reviewed and improved with each presentation.
- In contrast to the community forums conducted in prior years, the 2010 forums focused more on conversations about community with the forum participants, rather than trying to ‘solve’ future budget challenges or problems.
- The forum formats combined initial PowerPoint presentations with small group discussions and proved to be an effective and highly regarded strategy for engaging citizens in dialogue and conversation.
- The dialogue that occurred within the small group discussions demonstrated a strong connection between individual values and public service expectations.
- Conducting the forums in more informal settings throughout the community seemed to encourage more diverse participation from the community.
- The traditional means of publicizing the community forums – through public notices and media contacts, City web site news items, and neighborhood emails – should be augmented next year through expanded social media communications.
- The “Budget in Brief” four- page overviews provided an effective means of communicating more detailed information to supplement the budget information in the presentations and should be prepared following the adoption of the 2011 budget to communicate budget information to the public.
- The 30-minute Monday evening comment period at City Council meetings generated only a few comments during the initial eight months of the year. At the same time, the scheduled comment periods did not detract from the Monday meetings and should be continued in 2011 as a demonstration of the City’s emphasis on providing expanded opportunities for public comment and to underscore the City’s commitment to transparency and accountability.

Recommendations

1. Continue the practice of scheduling a public comment agenda item for each Monday evening City Council meeting. Alternative formats for the Monday evening comment periods should be offered. For example, publicizing specific fiscal issues or monthly topics, or expanding comment topics beyond fiscal matters may encourage greater public comment over time.
2. Conduct community forums in 2011, with a focus on expanding opportunities for public conversations with citizens.
3. Community forums in 2011 should also include an expanded explanation about the context and long-term impact of the state and federal fiscal policies that have resulted in the revenue crisis facing local communities.

